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Appl. No. 09/450,023
Response to Office Action of May 18, 2006
Amdt. Dated March 15, 2007

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a buyer's selection of a vendor via automated comparison of records and bidding by vendors of customized goods or services via a computer operated system, comprising steps of:

receiving a plurality of vendor records into an electronic memory associated with the a computer system, the vendor records corresponding to each of a plurality of vendors and having vendor capability data identifying a plurality of capabilities for said vendor to provide a customized good or service;

~~each~~ every buyer using the system providing information for identification of ~~identifying~~ a plurality of vendors for inclusion in a buyer associated pool of vendors, and the system storing electronic data sufficient to identify every vendor pool and its association ~~being associated~~ with a corresponding buyer, and wherein the determination of the buyer associated vendor pool is based upon the buyer provided vendor pool ~~buyer~~ identification information which occurs ~~occurring~~ prior to analysis of any job data pertaining to a job for which bids are sought by or on behalf of the buyer;

receiving a job data from or on behalf of at least one buyer, said job data including a job descriptor data which specifies a plurality of characteristics of said customized good or service for which said buyer wishes a price quote or bid;

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automatically comparing via a computer processor said vendor records to said job data, wherein said comparing includes comparing said plurality of characteristics for said customized good or service with corresponding plural capabilities for vendors from the pool of vendors associated with said buyer;

automatically identifying via a computer processor at least one subset from the pool of vendors as qualified for receiving an invitation for bid, based on said comparison;

selectively transmitting a solicitation to only selected members from the identified subset of the pool of vendors;

receiving bid response data from at least one of said vendors which received said solicitation, said bid response data identifying each of the vendors from which it was received and a bid price; and

outputting to said buyer at least one of said bid response data.

Please add the following new claims:

27. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein said job data further includes a selection criteria data, said selection criteria specifying at least one of a vendor name, a vendor capability, a descriptor of an ownership characteristic for said vendor, a descriptor of a union status of said vendor, and
wherein said comparison is performed in accordance with said selection criteria data.

28. (New) A method according to claim 1 further comprising steps of:
ranking said bid response data according to said represented bid price.

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29. (New) A method according to claim 2 further comprising steps of:
ranking said bid response data according to price; and
publishing ranked bid response data.

30. (New) A method according to claim 3 further comprising steps of:
ranking said bid response data according to price; and
publishing information to other vendors identifying a selected vendor and a rank order
value of said bid response data.

31. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein said vendor capability data
represents a vendor's capability to manufacture each of a plurality of different types of
customized goods.

32. (New) A method according to claim 1, further comprising steps of:
transmitting to said buyer an invoice for payment of said bid subsequent to receiving a
job completion data.

33. (New) A method according to claim 32, further comprising steps of:

transferring a payment from said buyer into an escrow account serving as a single-
source accounts payable destination for the buyer's vendor payments;
transferring a payment from said escrow account to an account of said vendor
corresponding to the invoice payment data.

35. (New) A method according to claim 32, further comprising steps of:
adding a system use fee to the invoice.

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